

**Remarks/Arguments**

Claims 1-9 are pending. The claims have been amended to more clearly and distinctly claim the subject matter that applicants regard as their invention, and to overcome objections under 35 USC 112, as noted below. No new matter is believed added by the present amendment.

**Objection to claims 1-9 under 35 USC 112, second paragraph**

Applicants submit that the objections to claims 1-9 under 35 USC 112, second paragraph are overcome in view of the amendments noted below.

Regarding claim 1, the phrase "... the mode of operation of the connectors..." has been deleted.

Regarding claim 4, the phrase "the input/output of the controller" has been replaced with "the controller." Applicants submit that the phrase "the controller" has proper antecedent basis in view of the phrase "... a splitter connected on the one hand to the first and second connectors through a switching circuit and on the other hand to a **controller**..." recited in claim 1. Also, the phrase "the link" has been replaced with "a link."

Regarding claim 5, the phrase "the input/output of the controller" has been replaced with "the controller." Applicants submit that the phrase "the controller" has proper antecedent basis in view of the phrase "... a splitter connected on the one hand to the first and second connectors through a switching circuit and on the other hand to a **controller**..." recited in claim 1. Also, the term "itself" has been replaced with "... the two-pathway splitter being..."

Regarding claim 6, applicants submit that the phrase "the controller" has proper antecedent basis in view of the phrase "... a splitter connected on the one hand to the first and second connectors through a switching circuit and on the other hand to a **controller**..." recited in claim 1. Also, the phrase "the main microprocessor" has been replaced with "a main microprocessor."

Regarding claim 9, the phrase "... external to the decoder." has been deleted.

In view of the above amendments, applicants submit that the objections under 35 USC 112, second paragraph are overcome.

**Rejection of claims 1-9 under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Hannah (US 5,784,581)**

Applicants submit that for the reasons discussed below amended claim 1, and the claims that depend therefrom are not anticipated under 35 USC 102(b) by Hannah. Hannah discloses a system wherein devices are capable of operating as either a master device or a slave device on a communication link such as a Universal Serial Bus (USB). As shown in Fig. 1, the host device is connected, via a HUB, to several peripheral devices. As further shown in Fig. 8, and its corresponding description, Hannah discloses the manner of detecting the presence or absence of an active host controller coupled to the communications port.

*"... A timer 45 is connected to device controller 44 and operates as a watchdog timer by generating a timeout signal used to determine the presence or absence of an active host controller." (col. 5, lines 64-67)*

Also,

*"... If a signal is received from an upstream device at step 74, indicating the presence of an active host controller, then control of the USB is given to the host controller and the USB device becomes a slave." (col. 7, lines 33-37)*

Nowhere does Hannah disclose or suggest determining the presence of a supply voltage in a first connector to switch the apparatus from a first mode of operation to a second mode of operation as claimed in amended claim 1.

The solution disclosed by Hannah allows for continuing communication between several devices when the host device is inactivated. Since several devices can be connected to a single HUB, each device has a determined duration for sending a signal. If no one device sends a signal, the device considers that no host device is connected to the communication network "... significant duration to ensure that an active host controller is either inactive or not coupled to the privileged port of the USB device. (col. 7, lines 18 - 20)" Therefore Hannah teaches determining whether a host

controller is attached to the network based on the time duration between signals on a network.

By contrast, the present claim recites means for detection of the **presence of the supply voltage** in the first connector, **and switching** the apparatus from the first mode of operation to a second mode of operation **in response to the presence of the supply voltage**. Nowhere does Hannah disclose or suggest this feature.

According to Hannah, when host controller 10 is active, "... VCR 50 may communicate with camera 54 through hub 12 and communication link 59 if instructed or permitted to do so by host controller 10." (col. 6, lines 39-41) If USB host controller 10 is inactive, the VCR can always communicate with the camera 54 via the dedicated hub 52. Therefore, the system according to Hannah does not disclose or suggest a switching "... the apparatus from a first mode of operation to a second mode of operation in response to the presence of the supply voltage" as recited in amended claim 1. In the exemplary embodiment of the invention, the presence of the supply voltage changes the position of the switching circuit (13) so as the apparatus (1) is considered as a slave device cannot communicate with the apparatus (3,4,5) connected to the second connector (12).

In view of the above, Applicants submit that Hannah fails to disclose or suggest a notable feature of present claim 1, and as such, present claim 1 is not anticipated by Hannah. Claims 2-9 depend from amended claim 1, and as such, Applicants submit that claims 2-9 also are not anticipated by Hannah for at least the same reason as those discussed above.

Having fully addressed the Examiner's rejections it is believed that, in view of the preceding amendments and remarks, this application stands in condition for allowance. Accordingly then, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully solicited. If, however, the Examiner is of the opinion that such action cannot be taken, the Examiner is invited to contact the applicant's attorney at (609) 734-6815, so that a mutually convenient date and time for a telephonic interview may be scheduled.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date

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